

Armstrong Students Learn Bullying Prevention Skills

NOVA's bullying prevention program at Armstrong Middle School promotes a supportive environment.

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NOVA representatives taught their Interpersonal Relationship Prevention Program to Armstrong students earlier this month. (Karla Davis Jones)

Levittown - Bullying is a fight for power — emotionally, socially or physically. NOVA (Network of Victims Assistance) recently brought their Interpersonal Relationship Prevention Program to Neil A. Armstrong Middle School March 2-11.

"Armstrong's School Counseling Department was thrilled to have NOVA once again share their important knowledge with our students about how to be an upstander and respond to bullying behavior that they may encounter," said Karla Davis Jones, school counselor.

The program promoted positive attitudes and actions that create a caring environment. Through interactive activities and videos, students learned new skills when it comes to bullying behaviors.

NOVA representatives explained that children may engage in bullying to feel powerful and in control of a situation. If students have trouble learning and focusing in school, they may lack a sense of control, which they may direct outward through aggressive acts. Teaching empathy and giving them the tools to prevent bullying can help decrease bullying behaviors.

"They seemed to really appreciate the impact that bullying behavior and harassment has on victims, bystanders and the school climate," said Pattie Cavalli, NOVA education and awareness prevention coordinator. "Hopefully students will look for opportunities to be upstanders and supportive of their peers using the 3 "D" model — direct, distract, delegate — that was presented."